

# Servicing Single-Piece and Multi-Piece Rim Wheels



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This informational booklet is intended to provide a generic, non-exhaustive overview of a particular standards-related topic. This publication does not itself alter or determine compliance responsibilities, which are set forth in OSHA standards themselves, and the *Occupational Safety and Health Act*. Moreover, because interpretations and enforcement policy may change over time, for additional guidance on OSHA compliance requirements, the reader should consult current administrative interpretations and decisions by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and the courts.

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# Servicing Single-Piece and Multi-Piece Rim Wheels

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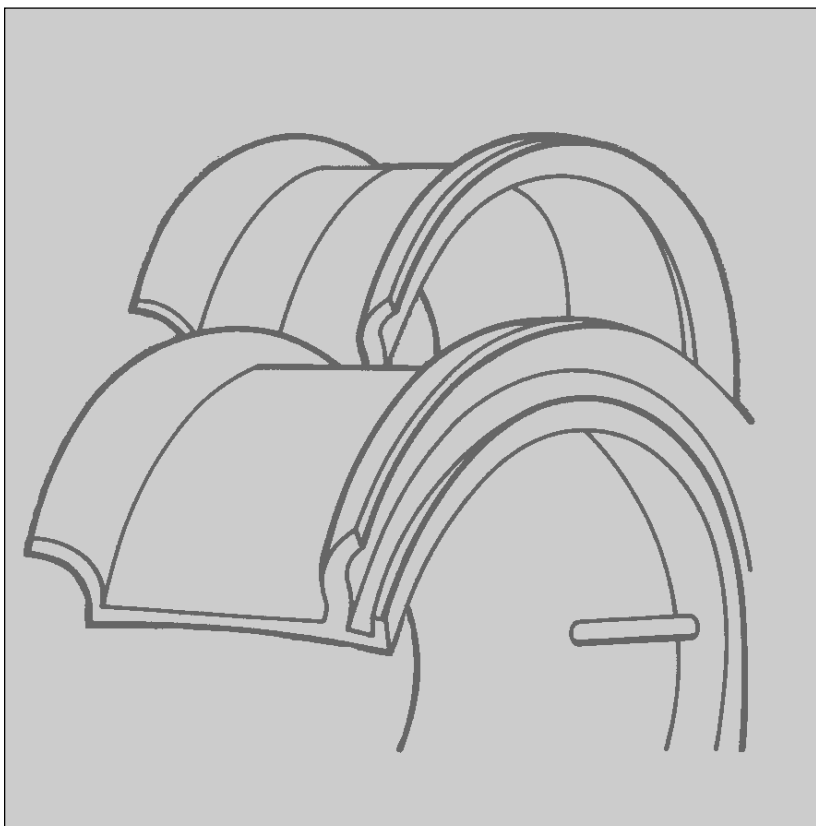
U.S. Department of Labor  
Alexis M. Herman, Secretary

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Charles N. Jeffress, Assistant Secretary

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A rim wheel is the component assembly of wheel (either multi-piece or single-piece), tire and tube, plus other components. A single-piece wheel is the component of the assembly used to hold the tire, form part of the air chamber (with tubeless tires), and provide the means of attachment of the assembly to the vehicle axle. A multi-piece wheel is a vehicle wheel consisting of two or more parts, one of which is a side or locking ring that holds the tire and other components on the rim wheel by interlocking the components when the tire is inflated.



## Why Are Safety Standards Needed for Servicing Single-Piece and Multi-Piece Rim Wheels?

Approximately 322,000 employees in more than 100,000 workplaces service large vehicle tires that are mounted on either multi-piece or single-piece wheels. In 1984, OSHA amended the safety standard for servicing multi-piece rim wheels (*29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.177*) to include requirements for the safe servicing of single-piece rim wheels used on large trucks, trailers, buses, and off-road machines. OSHA's standard does not apply to the servicing of rim wheels utilizing automobile tires or to trucks designated "LT" (light trucks).

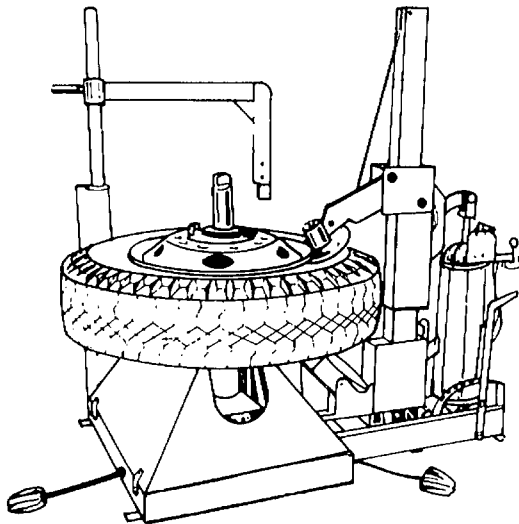
The amended safety standard for servicing single-piece and multi-piece rim wheels has four major requirements: (1) training for all tire servicing employees; (2) the use of industry-accepted procedures that minimize the potential for employee injury; (3) the use of proper equipment such as clip-on chucks, restraining devices or barriers to retain the wheel components in the event of an incident during the inflation of tires; and (4) the use of compatible components.

There has been a more than 70-percent reduction in multi-piece rim wheel servicing injuries since the original standard was issued in 1980—based on a review of the record of multi-piece rim wheel accidents investigated by OSHA. Similar results have been experienced with the regulation of single-piece rim wheel servicing where workers also face a significant risk of serious injury or death.

## What Are The Hazards of Working With These Large Vehicle Tires?

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The principal difference between accidents involving single-piece rim wheels and those involving multi-piece rim wheels is the effect of the sudden release of the pressurized air contained in a single-piece rim wheel. Single-piece rim wheel accidents occur when the pressurized air contained in the tire is suddenly released, either by the bead breaking or by the bead slipping over the rim flange. The principal hazards involve pressurized air which, once released, can either hurl an employee across the shop if the employee is in close proximity to the rim wheel and within the trajectory, or can propel the rim wheel across the workplace and into a worker. The trajectory of the air or rim wheel is any potential path or route (basically along the axis of the rim wheel) that a rim wheel component may travel during an explosive separation, or the area into which the air blast from a single-piece rim wheel may be released. In a multi-piece rim wheel accident, the wheel components separate and are released from the rim wheel with violent force. The severity of the hazard is related not only to the air pressure but also to the air volume.





## What Are Safe Operating Procedures for Single-Piece Rim Wheels?

Employees must be instructed in and must use the following steps for safe operating procedures with single-piece wheels:

- The tire must be completely deflated by removing the valve core before demounting.
- Mounting and demounting of the tire must be performed only from the narrow ledge side of the wheel. Care must be taken to avoid damaging the tire beads, and the tire must be mounted only on a compatible wheel of mating bead diameter and width.
- A nonflammable rubber lubricant must be applied to bead and wheel mating surfaces before assembling the rim wheel, unless the tire or wheel manufacturer recommends against the use of any rubber lubricant.
- If a tire changing machine is used, the tire may be inflated only to the minimum pressure necessary to force the tire bead onto the rim ledge and create an airtight seal before removal from the tire changing machine.
- If a bead expander is used, it must be removed before the valve core is installed and as soon as the rim wheel becomes airtight (when the tire bead slips onto the bead seat).
- The tire may be inflated only when contained within a restraining device, positioned behind a barrier, or bolted on the vehicle with the lug nuts fully tightened.
- The tire must not be inflated when any flat, solid surface is in the trajectory and within 1 foot (30.48 centimeters) of the sidewall.
- The tire must not be inflated to more than the inflation pressure stamped in the sidewall unless a higher pressure is recommended by the manufacturer.
- Employees must stay out of the trajectory when the tire is being inflated.
- Heat must not be applied to a single-piece wheel.
- Cracked, broken, bent, or otherwise damaged wheels must not be reworked, welded, brazed or otherwise heated.



## What Are Safe Operating Procedures for Multi-Piece Rim Wheels?

Employers must instruct employees to use the following steps for safe operating procedures:

1. The tire must be completely deflated by removing the valve core before a rim wheel is removed from the axle—
  - when the tire has been driven underinflated at 80 percent or less of its recommended pressure; or
  - when there is obvious or suspected damage to the tire or wheel components.
2. The tire must be completely deflated by removing the valve core before demounting.
3. A rubber lubricant must be applied to the bead and rim mating surfaces when assembling the wheel and inflating the tire unless the tire or wheel manufacturer recommends against its use.
4. If a tire on a vehicle is underinflated but has more than 80 percent of the recommended pressure, the tire may be inflated while the rim wheel is on the vehicle, provided remote control inflation equipment is used, and no employee remains in the trajectory during inflation.
5. The tire shall be inflated outside a restraining device only to a pressure sufficient to force the tire bead onto the rim ledge and create an airtight seal with the tire and bead.
6. Whenever a rim wheel is in a restraining device, the employee must not rest or lean any part of his/her body, or equipment, on or against the restraining device.
7. After tire inflation, the tire and wheel must be inspected while still within the restraining device to make sure that they are properly seated and locked. If further adjustment is necessary, the tire must be deflated by removing the valve core before the adjustment is made.

8. An attempt must not be made to correct the seating of side and lock rings by hammering, striking, or forcing the components while the tire is pressurized.
9. Cracked, broken, bent or otherwise damaged wheel components must not be reworked, welded, brazed, or otherwise heated. Heat must not be applied to a multi-piece wheel.
10. Whenever multi-piece rim wheels are being handled, employees must stay out of the trajectory unless the employer can show that performance of the servicing makes the employee's presence in the trajectory necessary.

The employer must furnish a restraining device for inflating a tire on a multi-piece wheel, or must provide a restraining device or barrier for inflating a tire on a single-piece wheel unless the single-piece rim wheel is bolted onto a vehicle during inflation. In all cases the employee must stay out of the trajectory.

The restraining device can be a cage, rack, or an assemblage of bars and other parts that will constrain all rim wheel components during an explosive separation of the multi-piece wheel or during the sudden release of the contained air of a single-piece rim wheel.

A barrier can be a fence, wall, or other structure or object placed between a single-piece rim wheel and an employee during tire inflation to contain the rim wheel components in the event of the sudden release of contained air. Each barrier or restraining device must be able to withstand the maximum force of an explosive rim wheel separation or release of the pressurized air occurring at 150 percent of the maximum tire specification pressure for the rim wheel being serviced.

Restraining devices showing any of the following defects must be immediately removed from service:

- cracks at welds;
- cracked or broken components;
- bent or sprung components caused by mishandling, abuse, tire explosion, or rim wheel separation; or
- component pitted due to corrosion or other structural damage that would decrease its effectiveness.

Restraining devices or barriers removed from service must not be returned to service until they are repaired and reinspected. Restraining devices or barriers requiring structural repair such as component replacement or rewelding must not be returned to service until they are certified by either the manufacturer or a Registered Professional Engineer as meeting the strength requirements as stated above (the force of 150 percent of the maximum tire specification pressure).

Current charts or a rim manual containing instructions for the types of wheels being serviced must be available in the service area, including a mobile service unit. Only tools that are recommended in the rim manual may be used for the type of wheel being serviced.

The employer must also supply air line equipment with a clip-on chuck with sufficient length of hose between the chuck and in-line valve or regulator to allow the employee to stand outside the trajectory, as well as an in-line valve with a pressure gauge or a presettable regulator.

The size (bead diameter and tire/wheel width) and type of both the tire and wheel must be checked for compatibility prior to assembly of the rim wheel. Mismatching of half sizes such as 16-inch (40.6 centimeters) and 16.5 inch (42 centimeters) tires and wheels must be avoided.

Multi-piece wheel components must not be interchanged except as indicated in the applicable charts or rim manuals.

Multi-piece wheel components and single-piece wheels must be inspected prior to assembly. Any wheel or wheel component that is bent out of shape, pitted from corrosion, broken, or cracked must be marked or tagged “unserviceable” and removed from the service area. Damaged or leaky valves must be replaced.

Rim flanges, rim gutters, rings, and the bead-seating areas of wheels must be free of any dirt, surface rust, scale, or loose or flaked rubber buildup prior to tire mounting and inflation.

The employer must provide a program to train all employees who service rim wheels in the hazards involved and the safety procedures to be followed.

The employer must assure that no employee services any rim wheel unless the worker has been instructed in correct procedures of mounting, demounting, and other servicing activities, and the safe operating precautions for the type of wheel being serviced.

At a minimum, the training program must include the requirements of the OSHA standard and the information in the manufacturers' rim manuals, or the OSHA charts. Charts are available from OSHA regional, area, or national offices.

The instruction must be conducted in an understandable way. Employees who are unable to read the charts or rim manuals must be trained in the subject matter. The employer must assure that each worker demonstrates and then maintains the ability to service rim wheels safely by correctly performing the following tasks:

- deflating and demounting tires;
- inspecting and identifying rim wheel components;
- mounting tires, including inflating them within a restraining device or other safeguard;
- handling rim wheels;
- inflating tires when single-piece rim wheels are mounted on a vehicle;
- understanding the necessity of standing outside the trajectory during inflation of the tires and of inspecting the rim wheels following inflation; and
- installing and removing rim wheels.

The employer must regularly evaluate each employee's performance and provide additional training, as necessary, to assure that each employee maintains his or her proficiency.

OSHA has a variety of programs to assist employers and employees in achieving a safe and healthful workplace. These include voluntary safety and health program management guidelines, free onsite consultations, and training and education.

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### Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines

Effective management of worker safety and health protection is a decisive factor in reducing the extent and severity of work-related injuries and illnesses and their related costs. To assist employers and employees in developing effective safety and health programs, OSHA published recommended Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines in the January 26, 1989, *Federal Register* (54 FR(18) pp. 3908-3916). These voluntary guidelines apply to all places of employment covered by OSHA.

The guidelines identify four general elements that are critical to the development of a successful safety and health management program:

- Management commitment and employee involvement;
- Worksite analysis;
- Hazard prevention and control; and
- Safety and health training.

Each element recommends specific actions to achieve an effective safety and health program. A single, free copy of the guidelines can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA/OICA Publications, P.O. Box 37535, Washington DC 20013-7535, by sending a self-addressed mailing label with your request, or by visiting OSHA's Web site at [www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov).

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### Free Onsite Consultation

Free, onsite safety and health consultation services are available to employers in all states who want help in establishing and maintaining a safe and healthful workplace. The service is largely funded by OSHA. Primarily developed for smaller employers with more hazardous operations, the consultation service is delivered by state governments employing professional safety consultants and health consultants. Comprehensive assistance includes an appraisal of all



mechanical systems, physical work practices, and environmental hazards of the workplace and all aspects of the employer's present job safety and health program. This program is completely separate from OSHA inspections. No penalties are proposed or citations issued for any safety and health problems identified by the consultants. Also, the service is confidential.

For more information concerning consultation services, see the list of consultation projects at the end of this publication.

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## Training and Education

OSHA's area offices offer a variety of informational services, such as publications, audiovisual aids, technical advice, and speakers for special engagements. OSHA's Training Institute in Des Plaines, IL, provides basic and advanced courses in safety and health for federal and state compliance officers, state consultants, federal agency personnel, and private sector employers, employees, and their representatives.

OSHA also provides funds to nonprofit organizations, through grants, to conduct workplace training and education in subjects where OSHA believes there is a lack of workplace training. Grants are awarded annually. Grant recipients are expected to contribute 20 percent of the total grant cost.

For more information on grants, training, and education, contact the OSHA Training Institute, Office of Training and Education, 1555 Times Drive, Des Plaines, IL 60018, (847) 297-4810.

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## Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP)

OSHA's Voluntary Protection Programs recognize and promote effective safety and health program management. In the VPP, management, labor, and OSHA establish cooperative relationships at workplaces that have implemented strong programs.

Sites approved for VPPs, Star, Merit, and Demonstration programs have met, and must continue to meet, rigorous participation standards. Benefits of VPP participation include improved employee motivation to work safely, leading to better quality and productivity; lost-workday case rates that generally are 60 percent to 80 percent

below industry averages; reduced workers' compensation and other injury- and illness-related costs; positive community recognition and interaction; further improvement and revitalization of already good safety and health programs; and partnership with OSHA.

For information about the VPP, contact the VPP Manager in your OSHA Regional Office, listed at the end of this publication.

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## State Programs

*The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970* encourages states to develop and operate their own job safety and health plans. The states administering occupational safety and health programs through plans approved under section 18(b) of the *Act* must adopt standards and enforce requirements that are "at least as effective" as federal requirements. There are currently 25 state plans: 23 cover the private and public (state and local governments) sectors and 2 cover the public sector only. For more information on OSHA-approved state plans, see the list of states with approved plans at the end of this publication.

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## Electronic Assistance

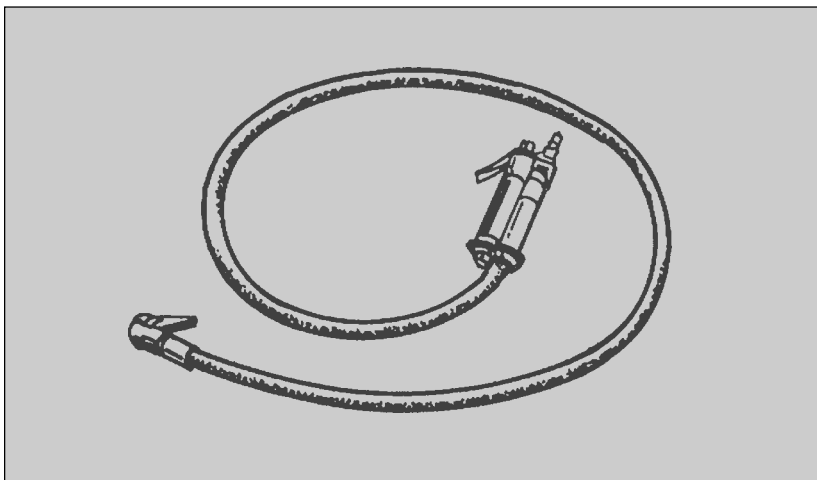
**Internet**—OSHA standards, interpretations, directives, and additional information are now on the World Wide Web at <http://www.osha.gov>.

**CD-ROM**—A wide variety of OSHA materials including standards, interpretations, directives, and more can be purchased on CD-ROM from the Government Printing Office. To order, write to the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15250-7954. Specify *OSHA Regulations, Documents and Technical Information on CD-ROM, (ORDT)*, S/N729-1300000-5. The price is \$43 per year (\$53.75 foreign); single copy \$17.00 (\$21.25 foreign).

## Emergencies

For life-threatening situations, call (800) 321-OSHA. Complaints will go immediately to the nearest OSHA area or state office for help.

For further information on any OSHA program, contact your nearest OSHA area or regional office listed at the end of this publication.



Single, free copies of the following publications can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA/OICA Publications, P.O. Box 37535, Washington, DC 20013-7535. Telephone (202) 693-1888 or Fax (202) 693-2498. Send a self-addressed mailing label with your request.

***OSHA Rim Wheel Servicing Charts***

***Hand and Power Tools***—OSHA 3080

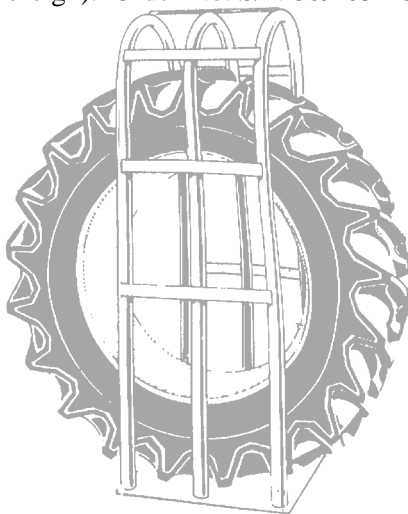
***All About OSHA***—OSHA 2056

Wheel Manufacturers' Rim Manuals (available from the manufacturer and related trade associations).

The following publication may be ordered, at cost, from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC 20402, (202) 512-1800. Include GPO Order No. and make check payable to the Superintendent of Documents.

***Code of Federal Regulations—Title 29, Parts 1900-1910.999***  
***General Industry***

(\$43) (\$53.75 Foreign). Order No. S/N 869-032-00104-9.



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**Director**

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800 W. Washington  
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(317) 232-2378

**Commissioner**

Iowa Division of Labor Services  
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**Secretary**

Kentucky Labor Cabinet  
1047 U.S. Highway, 127 South,  
Suite 2  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
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New Mexico Environment  
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(518) 457-2741

**Commissioner**

North Carolina Department  
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319 Chapanoke Road  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
(919) 662-4585

**Administrator**

Department of Consumer  
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Occupational Safety and Health  
Division (OR-OSHA)  
350 Winter Street, N.E.  
Room 430  
Salem, OR 97310-3220  
(503) 378-3272

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Puerto Rico Department  
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Building  
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South Carolina Department  
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Fort Lauderdale, FL .....	(954) 424-0242
Fort Worth, TX .....	(817) 428-2470
Frankfort, KY .....	(502) 227-7024
Harrisburg, PA .....	(717) 782-3902
Hartford, CT .....	(860) 240-3152
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ .....	(201) 288-1700
Guaynabo, PR .....	(787) 277-1560
Honolulu, HI .....	(808) 541-2685
Houston, TX .....	(281) 286-0583

Area	Telephone
Houston, TX .....	(281) 591-2438
Indianapolis, IN .....	(317) 226-7290
Jackson, MS .....	(601) 965-4606
Jacksonville, FL .....	(904) 232-2895
Kansas City, MO .....	(816) 483-9531
Lansing, MI .....	(517) 377-1892
Little Rock, AR .....	(501) 324-6291
Lubbock, TX .....	(806) 472-7681
Madison, WI .....	(608) 264-5388
Marlton, NJ .....	(609) 757-5181
Methuen, MA .....	(617) 565-8110
Milwaukee, WI .....	(414) 297-3315
Minneapolis, MN .....	(612) 664-5460
Mobile, AL .....	(334) 441-6131
Nashville, TN .....	(615) 781-5423
New York, NY .....	(212) 466-2482
Norfolk, VA .....	(757) 441-3820
North Aurora, IL .....	(630) 896-8700
Oklahoma City, OK .....	(405) 231-5351
Omaha, NE .....	(402) 221-3182
Parsippany, NJ .....	(201) 263-1003
Peoria, IL .....	(309) 671-7033
Philadelphia, PA .....	(215) 597-4955
Phoenix, AZ .....	(602) 640-2007
Pittsburgh, PA .....	(412) 644-2903
Portland, OR .....	(503) 326-2251
Providence, RI .....	(401) 528-4669
Raleigh, NC .....	(919) 856-4770
Salt Lake City, UT .....	(801) 487-0073
Sacramento, CA .....	(916) 566-7470
San Diego, CA .....	(619) 557-2909
Savannah, GA .....	(912) 652-4393
Smyrna, GA .....	(404) 984-8700
Springfield, MA .....	(413) 785-0123
St. Louis, MO .....	(314) 425-4249
Syracuse, NY .....	(315) 451-0808
Tampa, FL .....	(813) 626-1177
Tarrytown, NY .....	(914) 524-7510
Toledo, OH .....	(419) 259-7542
Tucker, GA .....	(770) 493-6644
Westbury, NY .....	(516) 334-3344
Wichita, KS .....	(316) 269-6644
Wilkes-Barre, PA .....	(717) 826-6538
Wilmington, DE .....	(302) 573-6115

## Region I

**(CT,\* MA, ME, NH, RI, VT\*)**

JKF Federal Building

Room E-340

Boston, MA 02203

Telephone: (617) 565-9860

## Region II

**(NJ, NY,\* PR,\* VI\*)**

201 Varick Street

Room 670

New York, NY 10014

Telephone: (212) 337-2378

## Region III

**(DC, DE, MD,\* PA, VA,\* WV)**

Gateway Building, Suite 2100

3535 Market Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104

Telephone: (215) 596-1201

## Region IV

**(AL, FL, GA, KY,\* MS, NC,\* SC,\* TN\*)**

Atlanta Federal Center

61 Forsyth Street, SW,

Room 6T50

Atlanta, GA 30303

Telephone: (404) 562-2300

## Region V

**(IL, IN,\* MI,\* MN,\* OH, WI)**

230 South Dearborn Street

Room 3244

Chicago, IL 60604

Telephone: (312) 353-2220

## Region VI

**(AR, LA, NM,\* OK, TX)**

525 Griffin Street

Room 602

Dallas, TX 75202

Telephone: (214) 767-4731

## Region VII

**(IA,\* KS, MO, NE)**

City Center Square

1100 Main Street, Suite 800

Kansas City, MO 64105

Telephone: (816) 426-5861

## Region VIII

**(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT,\* WY\*)**

1999 Broadway, Suite 1690

Denver, CO 80202-5716

Telephone: (303) 844-1600

## Region IX

**(American Samoa, AZ,\* CA,\* Guam, HI,\* NV,\* Trust Territories of the Pacific)**

71 Stevenson Street

Room 420

San Francisco, CA 94105

Telephone: (415) 975-4310

## Region X

**(AK,\* ID, OR,\* WA\*)**

1111 Third Avenue

Suite 715

Seattle, WA 98101-3212

Telephone: (206) 553-5930

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\*These states and territories operate their own OSHA-approved job safety and health programs (Connecticut and New York plans cover public employees only). States with approved programs must have a standard that is identical to, or at least as effective as, the federal standard.



